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The TAHRIK-i-JADID

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Editor:
NASEEM SAIFI

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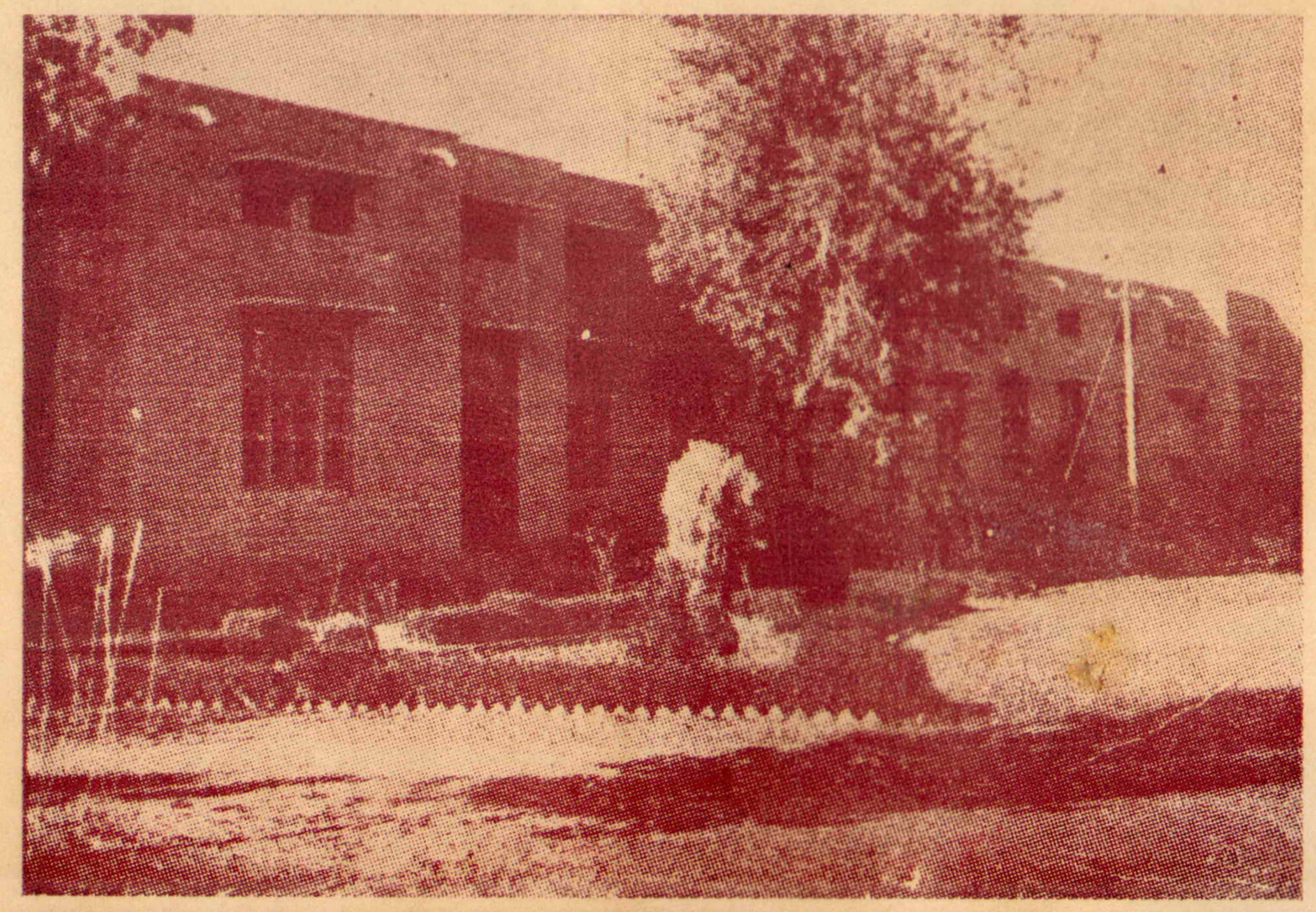

تحریک جدید انجمن احمدیہ پاکستان کے دفاتر

THE
TAHRIK-I-JADID
MONTHLY

Vol. VI OCTOBER 1970 No. 10

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Malfoozat

Love Your God

He whose heart is dead derives all his pleasures from the worldly affairs while the true believer does not love anything more than God. He who does not realise the significance of Faith and does not recognise God, can never go beyond the worldly pursuits. So long as such people have worldly affluence they are happy—they are happy with their wife too. But the time they lose worldly wealth they get annoyed with everyone—and their faces become as if they are swollen with anger. Their complaints spare no one. So much so that they are angry even with God. How then should God be happy with them ; He also gets angry with them.

The verse of the Holy Quran which runs thus: "And thou, O soul at peace ! Return to thy Lord well pleased with Him and He well pleased with thee" is a very good news for the believer. A disbeliever can never share this pleasure (of returning to God in such a position that he may be pleased with God and God be pleased with him). *Raziyatan* signifies that he has no objectives of his own because if his objectives are not achieved his going back to his Lord cannot be a source of pleasure for him. His objective always is his God. The Holy Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him, is a perfect example of that. He was given the good news "When the help of God arrived and also the victory" and "Today have I completed my religion for you".

(Malfoozat VI page 64)

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih

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Visits West African Ahmadiyya Missions

— VI —

Continuing his speech (on the 3rd of May) he said, "The Holy Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him, announces that all the human beings are equal, while there are people in the world who hate others and exploit them. They think that they are superior to others, whereas this is not a fact. Rather it must be said emphatically that this is wrong. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings be on him, announces that all men are equal. The message of the Holy Prophet is meant for the whole world and for all the times. This is the very message which has a basic value for mankind in the days to come. It is this equality of man to man which opens the way for everyone to develop according to his or her potentialities, and that he may soar high—as high as he can.

Man has been created to establish a living relationship with his Creator. The fact is that all those who strive for it, do establish a living relationsnip with their God, they also get nearer to the Holy Prophet, Mohammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him. This is a reality of life. Of course it does not mean that mankind is not one (simply because some can rise higher than others). Let me clarify my point with an example. We are sitting in the hall of the school. The school authorities give a test to the highest class. When the result is out, one of the students tops the list of the successful candidates and another is at the lowest end. That does not mean that the latter is not a student. Both of them are definitely students. In the same way all the human beings are human beings. We know that God is All-knowing; nothing is out to His sight. His knowledge encompasses everything. God, the Allknowing, gave a test to all the human beings in respect of their virtue and when the result was declared the Holy Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him, was found to be on the top of the list. He is most beloved to God; he is most virtuous. But despite all this, He said that he was like every other human being. What a beautiful message it is that has been given to mankind. Now it is your duty that tnis message be carried to every town and village and to every household.

We have been given assurance through the Mahdi, peace be on him, that we are going to witness the day of the victory of Islam over all other religions. The hearts of all the people in the world will be won for the Holy Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him. Islam will win, and the day of its victory is not far—and that, despite the opposition that the world is offering it. There is no power in the world that can check the progress of Islam. You should be certain of this victory—the day of the victory of Islam has dawned. Within a shrt period of time you will witness a great revolution. You should strive in the name of Islam and you will find that the Blessings of God and His Grace await you eagerly. In order to achieve this objective you should establish a living relationship with God. You should pray to Him and through your prayers you should acquire more spiritual knowledge aboutt the attributes of God who has created you.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih further said that the greatest of the spiritual sons of the Holy Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessinge of God be upon him, says that the more a man acquires the spiritual knowledge about God the more his faith is strengthened and he is drawn towards God as a piece of iron is attracted by the magnet. You should realise your responsibilities and fulfil them most honestly. It is you through whom a revolution in favour of Islam will take place. May God be the Helper of all of you and may He open the doors of His blessings and Mercy for you.

Huzur closed his Address with a silent prayer in which the whole audience joined him.

On the same day Huzur laid the foundation stone of the Ahmadiyya Nusrat Secondary School at Bununka Kunda near Bathurst. Sahibzada Mirza Mubarak Ahmad also placed a block in the foundation. Alhaj Sir F. M. Singhatey and Ch: Mohommad Sharif, Amir & Missionary-in-charge put the cement on the blocks—after which Hazrat Sayyeda Begum Sahiba and Lady F. M. Singhatey jointly placed a block on the cement (which had been spread there by Alhaj Singhatey and Ch: Mohammad Sharif).

After laying the foundation stone, Huzur prayed for God's blessings on the proposed institution and remarked that he had been told that the completion of the building will take a year and a half, if that be the case, he said, the foundation stone of another school will be laid on the occasion of the opening ceremony of this one. "If I am still alive, he said, I shall be here to formally open that second school."

On the 5th of May Huzur left the Gambia and arrived in Sierra Leone. Lungi is the Airport of Freetown (Sierra Leone) and from there the passengers have to go to Freetown by Ferry. As soon as Huzur's plane landed at Lungi, he was joyfully cheered by large number of members of the Community, well wishers and others as well. It took him almost two hours to reach Freetown and all this time the Radio Sierra Leone kept itself busy in commenting upon his journey.

In Freetown, he was lodged at the State Guest House which is now officially known as the Lodge and is reserved for Heads of State or other important Government Guests.

In the evening, Huzur addressed a Press Conference which was held on the ground floor of the the Lodge. It was attended by the representatives of the Newspapers, Radio and Television and News Agencies. At the very outset he said that he had visited Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia and the Gambia and he was pleased to say that he liked the Africans very much. They have smiles on their faces and they are simple minded and full of affection. My journey has been very pleasant and compfortable.

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When he was asked what the object of his visit was, he replied: To meet you and discuss with the high ups as to how the Ahmadiyya Jamaat could serve these countries better. He told the conference that the Jamaat had made considerable progress in the European countries as well. "We have our Mosques and Mission Houses in Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Holland, Spain, Yugoslavia—and of course in England where we have no less than 15 to 20 thousand Ahmadis. Very recently 25 Yugoslavian families living in Sweden have joined the Jamaat." Huzur said it was every body's right to get his talents developed and make full use

of his potentialities, especially this right belongs to the youth. He was very sorry, he said, to note that the moral condition of the European Youth had gone very low. "It is our duty now," he said, "that we should establish the spiritual values and pull these youth out of the degradatian into which they have fallen."

Answering a question about the mode of the prayer adopted by the Malikis and the Ahmadis, he remarked that this was a matter of jurisprudence and such differences did not matter much.

Huzur told the correspondants that the Jamaat had already translated the Holy Quran into English, German, Danish, Dutch, Swahili, Indonesian, Russian, Italian and Esperanto, French translation was to be published soon. "With the grace of God the translation of the Holy Quran into Sierra Leonian languages will be ready within the next five years. We are putting in selfless service. Our youth abandon their worldly pursuits and dedicate their lives for the service of mankind, at very nominal allowances. This spirit of sacrifice is a bounty from God and I can say it with confidence, that this is the very secret of our success."

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The Press Conference was simultaneously broad-cast by the Radio Sierra Leone.

At the end of the conference, a representative of the Radio asked Huzur to be granted an exclusive interview. The request was granted and Huzur answered a large number of questions from him. "What is the future of the rhligion" was one of the questions. Huzur said with great confidence, "The future of the religion is very bright. Love has always won victory over hate. Religion teaches love and it is strengthened through the expression of love. We are sure that our love will win a victory over the hate of the world, and Islam will become the religion of the whole world."

On the 6th of may, Huzur was received by His excellency Mr. Banja Tejan Sie, the Acting Governor General of Sierra Leone, at the State House. Mr. Banja Tejan Sie was so over-joyed to have such an august guest at his official residence that the first thing he said to Huzur was that his coming over to Sierra Leone was a great blessing. He also expressed his appreciation for the good work the Jamaat is doing in his country, especially in the field of education. Huzur remarked that the Government is like a father to the people and it is of utmost importance that the children of the country are properly looked after and given good education so that they can devolop their mental potentialities.

In answer to a question about the political life of the Community, Huzur told His Excellency that the Jamaat was not, as a matter of principle, permitted to take part in politics actively (though individuals can and they do, to the advantage of their respective homelands). "What he thought of the Islamic Socialism", was another question posed by His Excellency. In answer to it, Huzur explained at some length, the economic system of Islam which is in a nut shell is the ideology of equality of man to man with chances to develop, irrespective of race, colour of religion. "Islam teachers us to respect every human being, who ever he might be", he said.

Communism also came up for discussion and His Excellency was so satisfied with what Huzur told him that he could not restrain himself from saying that never had anybody explained the matter so nicely.

Huzur also made mention of the proposed Health Centres and remarked that this work really needed a lot of sacrifice. At the close of the meeting, Sahibzada Mirza Mubarak Ahmad presented a copy of the Holy Quran (with English translation and short notes) to His Excellency who expressed his hearty gratitude on this wonderful presentation.

From there Huzur went to call on the Prime Minister. In the evening he attended the Reception where the invitees were introduced to him one by one. While he was chatting with them, he told them that Islam is a religion of peace. The peoples of Africa who have been suppressed one way or the other, deserve sympathy more than anybody else. And this love and sympathy can be given to them by Islam alone. The time has come, he said that their rights which have been snatched from them should be given back to them and amends should be made to all the suppression that they have so far suffered.

The next day (7-5-70) Huzur visited the Ahmadiyya Secondary School, Freetown. After the recitation from the Holy Quran and a report from the Principal, Huzur addressed the Staff and the students. Huzur said, "I am very pleased to meet my children. The progress report that the Principal of the school has read is indeed very encouraging and I am confident that in future you will do still better and improve upon your achievements.

You are the people who believe, in, All-Powerful, All-Knowing God. He is there and everything that is is there is through Him. He is the One who has created everything for us and has made everything subservient to us. Eighty years ago he selected one of His servants who was living at Qadian, an unknown small inhabitation. This sesvant of His was known to no one. He was considered to be very insignificant by his relatives. But he was selected by God and told that humanity has forgotton its Creator; it was now for him to call humanity back to God. And God, the Almighty, promised to him His help and told him that despite great oppositions, he will be victorious and ultimate domination will belong to him.

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When this servant of God announced to the world that he had been sent to the world to light the lamp of salvation and certainity every body girded up his loins to oppose him. The world wanted to stifle this voice but it could not be. Now every-one of you is a proof of the fact that the Promised Messiah, peace be upon him, was a true claimant. Whatever he said was correct. His voice, in fact, was an echo of the voice which had been raised to glorify the name of God, the Almighty.

Huzur further said that God is All-powerful. He is the source of all beauty and the fountain of all knowledge. He says that it is He who has created everything and whatever is there has been made subservient to us. If that is true, and it certainly is true, then it devoloves a great responsibility on us. This fact leads us to believe that everything is for our benefit and we should make everything work for us. If we try and act upon the commands of God, we certainly can control the powers of nature. But we must not forget that there is a very close link between man and the universe.

On the 8th of May, Huzur performed the opening ceremony of the Ahmadiyya Mosque, Leicester which is in the vicinity of the Fourabay University. It was a Friday.

Huzur opened the door to declare the mosque formally opened and then led the Friday service. In his sermon Huzur told the audience that he was extremely glad to be in their midst because he looked at everyone of them as a sign of God. He referred to the revelation of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, which runs thus: "I shall give you a large party of Islam". He stressed the point that the Ahmadiyya Jamaat was neither a Club nor a worldly organisation. It is a divine community. He explained at some length the difference between a divine community and a worldly organisation. He also told them what the place of mosque in Islam is. "The mosque is the House of God and whoever wants to worship one God can do so there", he said.

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In the evening the Muslim Congress, the biggest and the strongest Muslim Party in Sierra Leone, arranged a Reception for him. The Address of welcome was read out by Mr. M.S. Mustafa, the President of the Congress and the vice Prime Minister in the previous Government. The Address made mention of the Muslims before the Ahmadiyya Jamaat was established there and the difference that could now be seen everywhere. The Congress greatly appreciated the work so sincerely done by the Pakistani Missionaries in educating the country in Islamic way of life and also providing the Muslim children with a large number of schools. Stress was laid on the unity of the Muslims, for that, the Address said, could bring the day of the victory of Islam nearer.

Mr Mustafa was followed by Mr. Abdullah Cole who also had quite a number of good things about the Jamaat to tell the audience.

In his reply to the Address, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih thanked the Muslim Congress for the Reception and for the good words they had the courage to say about the Jamaat and its activities. He further remarked that he did not think he deserved all the good words used about him; he was in fact a humble servant of God and His beloved, the Holy Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him. "We have come here to serve the people and the country" he said "and we can assure you that we do not think that we are in any way superior to the people of Sierra Leone. We have not come here to exploit you. We do not take away a penny from here. On the other hand, we spend huge amounts for the welfare of the people of this land." He cited the example of the Ahmadiyya Dispensary, Kano (Nigeria) where the Dispensary had saved no less than £25,00 but this amount has been used to develop the dispensary for the benefit of the people of that area.

He also dilated on the theme that God of Islam is a living God. No amount of human knowledge can be equated with His Knowledge.

Before closing he said, I should like to tell you in unequivocal words that the time for the victory of Islam has arrived and there is nothing on the earth that can stop Islam from domination all other religions of the world. From the human point of view it might seem impossible but God has told me that the day of the victory of Islam has dawned. With the grace of God, this impossibility will certainly come to pass.

(more)

Notes & Comments

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih

It is hoped that before this issue of the Tahrik-i-Jadid is out, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih will have come back to Rabwah. We pray to God for his safe arrival and for his health and long life. While at Aobotabad his health was generally good though at times he had an attack of low blood pressure and headache.

Sahibzada Mirza Mubarak Ahmad, Vakil-i-A'la and Vakil-ut-Tabshir will also have come back from Abbotabad and resumed his duty in the office before the fifth of October. He is much better now and wishes his thanks to be extended to all the friends who have been praying for him so sincerely and affectionately.

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Jamia Ahmadiyya

The Jamaat needs a large number of Missionaries to work within Pakistan as well as outside Pakistan. It is the Jamia Ahmadiyya where the Missionaries are trained. The Khalifatul Masih expects you to dedicate your own life or urge your children to dedicate their lives for the service of Islam. Let there be more students at the Jamia and let there be more Missionaries of Islam to all the nooks and corners of the world. A great responsibility rests on your shoulders.

Ta'limul Quran Class

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih graced the closing function of the Fazl-i-Omar Ta'limul Quran Class which took place on the 30th of August. In his brief but very pithy Adress Huzur drew the attention of the students to the fact that the success could open the door to error and misguidance, ss it could also open the door to guidance and the blessings of God. Anyone who thought that his success was purely due to his own brilliance and to his personal qualities he is led astray from his God and in fact he starts walking on the path of the Satan—the path which takes him to the lap of the Devil. But whoever realises that his success is a favour of God and it is He and no one else who has granted him success, he gets nearer to God and this success becomes a source of other blessings still waiting to come to him.

He said he would like to tell the students (and through the students to everyone else) that there are two things in the world which are considered to be sources of ble sings. Wealth, knowledge, pedigree and many other things of the same sort are rightly considered to be sources of blessing. God has drawn our attention through revelation of the Promissed Messiah, peace be on him, that the whole of the blessing really lies in the Holy Quran. The revelation is : Al-Khairo Kullohoo fil Quran.

It means that whatever has to become a source of blessing must be in line with the teachings of the Holy Quran. If our earnings are contrary to the teachings of the Holy Quran, those earnings will becomes unlawful and will have no blessings for the owner. Take the case of mutual accord. It is something good for everyone. But if the people hate others and try to humiliate them, their acts will be undesirable and they will find no blessings whatsoever.

The fact is that the real blessings lie in following the teachings of the Holy Quran The other thing that is full of blessings is the example of the Holy Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings of Cod be upon him.

Let everybody remember these two thihgs ; the Holy Quran and the example of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him.

B. A. Bashir

Originally Published in Sierraleone

Mohammad

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The Holy Prophet of Islam

If the Rev Boadi had made a superficial study of Islam, he would have been convinced of the veracity of Islamic faith and would have acknowledged the Prophet Mohammad, a saviour and benefactor of humanity.

In dealing with his points, one by one, in his article (Spectator of June 20), we first take note of the naming of the child.

The angel who appeared to Joseph told him to name the child Jesus, but what was spoken of the Lord by the prophet says that, "he would be called Emmanuel".

Now the source of information is one, yet the two messages are contradictory. Was he ever called Emmanuel? Which of the two is correct ? Again Emmanuel means "God with us".

Even this does not apply to Christ and his disciples aptly. The very words of Jesus "Eli, Eli Lama Sabach Thani, My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me" (St. Matthew 27 : 46) are conclusive that God was not with Jesus nor even with his disciples.

Peter about whom Jesus said he would build his Church on this rock denied him thrice, swore and cursed him at a time when his master was in need of his sympathy and loyalty.

Does the reverend call this a "glorious message"?

Again he quotes : The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David".

For God's sake tell me did Jesus ever sit on the throne of David ? Did he ever rule the world ? No doubt he was ambitious to do so but fate was not in his favour.

Seizure of Power

He planned to seize power by force. Acting on "Freedom is not given but taken" he advised his disciples "and he that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one" (St. Luke 22 : 36).

Romans kept him under surveillance. One day he was arraigned in the court of Pilate accused of spreading seditions against the Roman Empire.

No doubt he applied all methods, fair or foul, but could not succeed in achieving his end. So the prophecy that he will sit on the throne of David proved to be no more than wishful thinking of a power hungry person.

Mr Boadi made mention of "The gospel of Barnabas". Let it be known that Barnabas was one of the closest disciples of Christ. Like Matthew, Luke he, too, wrote the gospel which was full in praise of the Holy Prophet Mohammed.

The reference to this very Gospel was made for the first time in the sixth century when it was proscribed by the Church authorities and added to the list of "forbidden books" known as "Apocryphal".

'Apokruphos' is a Greek word which means 'hidden'.

The gospel was kept in the hide because its study had shaken the faith of some in Christ.

The point I wish to stress is that Islam began in the seventh century of christian era while the study of this gospel was forbidden in the sixth century.

Therefore it is beyond human comprehension that a Muslim could have tampered with it. Impossible !

The present day spread and growth of Islam is generally attributed to the sword. Mr. Boadi has harped on the same old tune which is no longer acceptable to such intellectuals who have made systematic and scientific study of Islamic faith.

"There is no compulsion in the matter of religion" says the Holy Quran.

Tahrik-i-Jadid,

Just for the sake of argument, if Islam owes its growth and spread to the sword then why is it still gaining more souls than Christianity?

Just to prove the divinity of Christ, Mr. Boadi writes "that Jesus did not marry while Mohammad had ten wives."

To be honest celibacy is no credit. If the example set by Jesus is laudable and worth trying why christians do not follow suit.

The point that Jesus was married or not is disputable. A sect of Christianity founded by Joseph Smith known as "Mormons" maintains firmly that Jesus was married and had two wives at a time.

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The Wives

Mary Magdalene and Martha, much in picture, were his wives. This claim of Mormons is based on St. John Chapter Two when we meet Jesus in the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee together with his disciples.

They assert that the bridegroom of the feast was no other person than Jesus himself. Just to prove his divinity his name has been intentionally omitted.

If Mary, mother of Jesus, was one of the guests then why was she worried about other guests who were not entertained?

Being the mother of the bridegroom her anxiety was natural. The claim that Jesus was married is not advanced by Muslims but christians themselves.

The first miracle attributed to Jesus was turning of water into wine against which the law has been passed recently by the Ghana Government that children of 18 years age are barred from entering night clubs and beer bars. Is this the miracle which the Reverend Boadi is so much proud of?

Ungratefulness

He further traced the genealogy of Holy Prophet Mohammad to Ishmael whom he describes illegitimate son of Abraham. I feel it is the height of ungratefulness.

It was Mohammed who absolved Jesus of the charge of illegitimacy levelled against him by the Jews.

Jews up to this day maintain that Jesus was born of illegitimate wedlock.

But it was Mohammed who cleared him of this charge as it was foretold in St. John 16 : 12-14.

The Bible, too, has done Jesus a great injustice by including in his genealogy three women—Thamar, Rachab and the wife of Urias whom it describes as harlots and prostitutes.

"Rachab was a harlot (Joshua 2 : 1). Thamar committed adultery with her father-in-law (Genesis 37 ; 16-19).

The Prophet David from whose lineage was Jesus and who was to sit on his throne is reported to have committed adultery with Bathshaba, wife of Urias (2 Samuel 11 : 2-5).

Can the Rev. Boadi pluck courage and show ordinary courtesy by denouncing publicly what has been attributed to Jesus by the Bible?

Reverend Boadi further observed that display of unusual knowledge and understanding of the holy scriptures by Jesus is a sign of his divinity.

I don't dispute the statement. All prophets are above human intelligence and their understanding of law of God is "amazingly high."

But in the case of Jesus I would object. Being the son of God, he was to teach and not to be taught.

Did he not attend synagogues which were not only places of worship for Jews, but also institutions for learning?

Our Prophet Mohammad has been described "the unlettered prophet." who had never been to any school or college. He was taught by God Himself.

"The Lord of Mighty Powers has taught him" so says the Holy Quran (vide 53-6).

The miracles of Jesus will evaporate when we discuss those of the Prophet Mohammad.

Belief

If Jesus really had raised dead to

life and given sight to the blind no doubt the entire population of Jerusalem would have believed in him.

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But we find only 12 who believed in him and among them one Judas, turned to be a traitor who up to this day is cursed by the christian world for having betrayed the trust reposed in him by his master.

The Reverend expects to attain salvation through one who himself is not certain of his own salvation.

The Jews held him to be accursed, the christians too out of a desire to attain easy salvation, admitted that he was really accursed.

Our salute to Mohammad, the saviour of humanity, about whom George Bernard Shaw, who is considered to be one of the great thinkers of the 20th century writes:

"I have studied him, the wonderful man, and, in my opinion, far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the saviour of humanity.

"I believe if a man like him were to assume dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring in happiness."

INTERESTED

IN

Comparative Religions ?

Read :

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

Address

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

P. O. Rabwah, W. Pak.

(Continued from page 15)

On January 21, 1958, "FRONT AGAINST ISLAM SOUGHT AT SYNOD"

The Christian concern about the spread of Islam had by then reached such a height that the Daily Times had to intervene editorially on January 22, 1958.

It will be interesting to recall that within a week from the date that the Anglican Syond's decision to expose the weaknesses of Islam was published in the Press, The Truth, the only Muslim newspaper in Nigeria, started pubishing a series of editorials on "Weak Points of Christianity". It ran seven enitorials (now available in pamphlet form under title: This is Christianity).

The matter having reached thus far was taken over by the Conference of the Muslim Leaders who wrote a letter to Rt. Rev. Bishop Howells on March 31, 1958, who in turn handed it over to the Christian Council of Nigeria.

That is the whole story. I am very glad that after all the Anglicans have now agreed to the suggestion of Maulvi Saifi to have a full length friendly discussion on the basic doctrines of Islam and Christianity.

I wish the meetings of the Christians and the Muslims all the success.

Tahrik-i-Jadid,

Originally published in The Truth

Muslim-Christian Co-operation

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By A. R. A. OTULE,

Secretary General, Ahmadiyya Mission, Nigeria

THE DAILY TIMES, LAGOS, of March 5, 1959 has reported a meeting of the Muslim and Christian leaders at which "the Christian and Muslim leaders have agreed to hold quarterly meetings for 'friendly exchange of views on the fundamental doctrines of Christianity and Islam essential to salvation' which might produce clearer understanding, friendliness and tolerance among the community and augur well for a happy Nigeria now on the threshold of nationhood."

This, I belive, is the most important and far reaching step that the Muslim and the Christian leaders have ever taken in this country. And I wish the greatest possible success to these proposed meetings. But how did it at all come about? That is what I intend to show in the following few lines.

On May 18, 1957, the Daily Times carried the frontpage headline: "ANGLICANS ALARMED BY SPREAD OF ISLAM" with a picture of Rt. Rev Bishop Howells. The sub-heading read: Synod seeks campaign against 'intrusion".

> And the news said, inter alia, "Members of the Anglican Synod which ended its meeting in Lagos yesterday unanimously deplored what was described as "the menace of Islam" to Christian affairs in Nigeria. Speakers at the meeting alleged that Islam was making serious inroads calculated to demoralise Christians in their beliefs ...The Synod then adopted a four point programme by which it proposes to combat this 'unwarranted intrusion': (1) Christian teaching of the Bible is to be encouraged. (2) Christian experts on Islam are to be invited to give instruction and simple lesson on Islam (3) Open Air Christian meetings are to be held weekly in every parish on the weaknesses of Islam, (4) Gospel tracts are to be printed and widely circulated.',

Havivg read this report, Maulvi Naseem Saifi, Chief Ahmadiyya Missionary, West Africa, wasted no time in suggesting the only solution to this 'problem' of the Christians. *The Truth* published the following statement from him:

> "The Anglican Synod which ended its sittings in Lagos recently is reported to have decided upon a four-point programme. One of these points is Open air Christian meetings are to be held weekly in every parish on the weakness of Islam.'
>
> I on behalf of the Ahmadiyya Muslims in the whole of West Africa in general and in Nigeria in particular declare that there are no weaknesses in the teachings of Islam. We welcome the meetings of the Anglicans but we suggest that a friendly debate be held in a public place on the subject:
>
> Which religion is suitable for mankind?
>
> or any other subject that Christians think would help the public. From the date of the publication of this announcement, we shall wait for a reply from the Anglicans for fifteen days. If no reply is received within that period it

will become quite clear that Christianity is quite unsuitable for the people in this age and that Islam is the only religion which is now acceptable to God and which can help mankind in all the aspects of life.

Communications to be addressed to: Maulvi Naseem Saifi, Chief Ahmadiyya Missionary, West Africa, 45, Idumagbo Avenue, (P. O. Box No. 418), Lagos.

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He also issued a statement through the West African Ahmadiyya News Agency which was given due prominence in the national papers. The West African Pilot reported that Statement on May 20, the Daily Service on May 21, the Daily Times on May 22nd and the Nigerian Tribune on May 24th 1957.

The West African Pilot took a deeper interest in the matter and wrote an editorial on the Synod's decisions. That editorial is worth reproduction. It ran thus:

CHRISTIAN FAITH IN DANGER

Is the Christian Church moving with the times? Are the ideologies laid down by the Jesus of Nazareth some two thousand years ago still being observed by twentieth century priests and clergymen? Indeed, is the Christian Church of today equipped to combat what some of its standard bearers have glibly referred to as the "menace of Islam!

A review of the decision taken by the recent Anglican Synod which met in Lagos does not provide a happy picture. In one sentence: modern materialism has caught up and overtaken the Church. The Church does not seem to have an answer to the grave issues facing mankind today. To come nearer home, the voice of the church is silent at a time when the nation moves forward to independence. The answer to 'the menace of Islam' does not lie in Synods sitting on Mount Olympus and issuing decrees to a distracted people.

In any case, the Anglican Synod must be aware that it took a very unwise decision by resolving to forbid its members taking chieftaincy titles Any Faith, be it Christianity, Islamism, Hinduism or Budhism which must thrive in Africa must be prepared to compromise its tenets to suit modern society. To preach that Africans should forsake their traditions in order to keep face with ministers of religion is to preach national suicide.

The Christian Church is aware that the African society is essentially communal and polygamous. The church in Nigersa. has for decades been faced with the problem of ploygamy. It is still searching fo an answer and may continune its search till Christ comes again! Let church leaders think again. A solution must be found to the cause of empty pews on Sundays. If the warning is not heeded, Islam may march triumphantly to the southernmost end of Nigeria! (May 21, 1957)

The Statement of Maulvi Saifi was reported in the Daily Service (May 21, 1957) as follows:

MUSLIM CHIEF REPLIES SYNOD

Maulvi Naseem Saifi, the Chief Ahmadiyya Missionary for West Africa, has described the report of the Anglican Synod published in the press as a reaction to the recent activities of his mission.

The Anglican Synod was reported to have been alarmed by the spread of Islam and that a four-point programme to combat what it termed this 'unwarranred

intrusion" was adopted by it.

The Maulvi further remarked that the reasons given by the Synod for the failure of Christianity did not reach the core of the problem. The real reason he said was that the people were getting fed up with unworkable code of life which Christianity presented. They wanted something practicable and Islam was the only religion that could satisfy them.

The Maulvi went on "We are speeding up our own aetivities. We want to see that in our own life time this great country becomes Muslim, and by that I mean that whole population joins Islam. Our living God who never died, not even for one day, will help us. We are confident."

On the publication of this Statement the public—Christians and Muslims—took evry keen interest in the matter. Even the Sunday Times Pastor took note of what was going on and devoted one of his sermons for this subject. On May 26 he said,

"Recent headlines announcing that Anglicans are alarmed at the spread of Islam has brought reaction from several quarters-Christians and Muslims." He further said, "it may be true that our Muslim friends are exchanging presents, incorporating ceremonies and weaning Christians from Sunday worship. But all this would be no cause for alarm were it not for one basic trouble. A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF CHURCH MEMBERS ARE CHRISTIAN ONLY IN NAME."

Somebody who wrote under the name of 'Anglican' from Ibadan said, "ONSLAUGHT ON ISLAM WON'T SOLVE PROBLEM OF ANGLICANS"

A prominent lawyer in the country, Mr. Magnus Williams, got a letter published in the Daily Service. It was headed :

"ISLAM IS NOT A MENACE TO CHRISTIANITY"

The letter started thus : "I do not know what your views will be but it is unfortunate that Anglicans have seen red about Islam. Islam is not a menace to Christianity. If anything is a menace to Christianity it is practised by Christians these days.....I should say at once that I am an out and out Anglican. To be blunt, it is my opinion that the Anglican Church is a spiritual Civil Service and is uncharitable and hypocritical." May 28.

Mr. Tunji Ategbeye wrote in the Daily Times of May 31, inter alia : "That Islam is spreading faster than Christianity may be a statement of fact. The Synod is in a good position to judge from the statistics available to it. That more and more Christians are converted to Islam may also be true. But to lay emphasis on the subtle dissuasion of Christians against Sunday devotion, the adoption of the Christian harvest ceremony by Muslims and the exchange of presents between Muslims and Christians as the major causes of the decline in the spread of the Gospel is to turn our faces away from the facts."

The Catholics who are seldom in the field of controversies, also came out with a signed article from the Editor of the Herald (now defunct). The writer said, "The Ahmadiyya Missioner is continuously boasting of the tremendous conquest being made by Islamism on the people of Nigeria and of West Africa as a whole. This vain boast is a species of 'Inferiority Complex' aecentuating the innate barrenness and uninspiring nature of Islamism as a

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religion, We are well aware of the captivating influence which Islam has made and is yet making on a considerable section of West African population. The human explanation of this fact we know, although we deliberately refuse to disclose it here and now. We fully appreciate the anxiety of the Anglican Authorities over the seemingly steady inroads being made by Islam on the inhabitants of Nigeria, Christians not excluded. We deeply sympathise with them. But needless to say we donot share their false alarm much less subscribe to the remedies they indicated as likely to stem the advance of Islam. We are not alarmed by the spasmodic phenomenal numerical gains of Islam, because we are familiar with its history and past glorious-or inglorious-achievements. We know its devastating effect on the Church flourishing considerably in the seventh century all along the North—East of Africa. The Church has not yet fully recovered the loss in those territories. But, so what? Providence has its purpose in this seeming failure of Christianity in that region. After all, the Divine Founder of Christianity won no more than a handful of followers to His cause before He died. And then, the Church was Catholic, that is, universal! What is more, by His ignominous death, Christ's mission seemed to have been defeated by his enemies. But, where human wisdom ends, there Divine wisdom begins! His glorious resurrection is cogent proof of Christ's success in His mission. Hence the Catholic Church is not and cannot be dismayed by the seeming victory of Islam in Nigeria, any more than she is of Communism in Russia, China and other Communist-dominated countries."

It was after all these publications, and many more, that the Anglican Church issued a Statement which was published in the Daily Times on June 11. This is how the Daily Times reported the Statement:

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".....The Synod had also expressed alarm at the unwarraned intrusion" of Islam into Christian affairs. It feared Christianity was yielding too much ground to other religions. In a statement yesterday, the Synod said that the alarm was not against the "progress" of Islam but against the laxity of the Christians in Nigeria who were being influenced by methods which they otherwise could safely avoid. Declining the Muslim invitation for a public debate on the two religions, the Synod said: "Legitimately Christianity is not so much a religion to be argued about, as a life to be lived. "To accept the challenge, would lead to needless controversy and bitterness which it detested."

Thus the hopes of a friendly discussion were shattered with the refusal of the Anglican Church to accept the suggestion of Maulivi Saifi. The following Statement was then issued by him:

WHYMUSLIM FESTIVALS CLASH WITH CHRISTIANS?

I am not in the least surprised at the rejection of my proposal for an open debate on the merits of Islam and Christianity. That has always been the attitude of the Christian religious dignitaries. But I still feel convinced that the only way of solving this problem is to have a debate on the subject'. Even if Christianity is not 'so much of a religion but a way of life to be lived', can't the various ways of life be compared with one another and a decision taken as to which way of life is better

and more suitable.

I wonder what it is if not ignorance, to blame the Muslims for holding their socials 'festivals' on Sundays. 'Festivals' need a holiday and Sunday is a holiday. I shall be too glad if the Government of Nigeria will think over this problem and declare Sunday also a working day as is the case with Fridays. It should not be difficult to have another day off. I should like to propose Wednesday as holiday. Now that the country is approaching self-government and the country will have a secular government, it is of very great importance that no sacred day of any religion be observed as a holiday at the cost of the fellowers of other religions.

I strongly recommed that Sunday should be a working day like Friday and another day be chosen to be observed as a holiday. So long as Sunday will continue to be a holiday, the Muslims will be justified to think that the Government is a Christian Government, which they will not tolerate after self-government.

When in the latter part of 1957, Sir Kenneth Grubb, President of the Christian Missionary Society, came to Nigeria and he held a press Conference at the Bishopcourt, Lagos, Maulvi Saifi. attended the Conference as the representative of The Truth. In answer to a question from Maulvi Saifi, Sir Kenneth said, "a full discussion of disagreement between Nigerian Muslims and Christians would be to the interest of the whole country." Daily Times November 27, 1957.

Despite the fact that Sir Kenneth had said that a discussion would be to the interest of the whole country, the Anglican Syonod did not make any move to accept the suggestion of Maulvi Saifi. On the contrary the Press reports contidued showing the trend of the Anglican thought.

On December 7, 1957, the Daily Times headlined the following news on its backpage: "Church alarmed by spread of Islam in Nigeria."

> A Church of England survey reported in London yesterdy that "Islam is now spreading to the pagan and Christian areas" of West Africa. The survey was compiled from recent worldwide reports of Bishops of the Churches of the Anglican communion. The great rival of Christianity for the soul of West Africa is Islam," it said. Traditionally, the northern parts of all these territories. where they border on the Sahara, are Muslim areas which have had contact with heartlands of Islam for a thousand years.
>
> It is not surprising that, with the greater mobility of modern times, Islam is now spreading to the Pagan and Christian areas. The Bishop of Lagos writes that throughout Nigeria and especially in Lagos, the Islamic religion appears to be gaining more and more adherents. The same is true of Ibadan, the educational centre of the country...

On January 13, 1958, the Daily Times headlined

> "AFRICA MUST DECIDE IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS"
>
> 'Church Congress discusses choice of three beliefs.'
>
> On January 14, 1958, CHRISTIAN CHURCH WORRIED ABOUT ISLAM IN NIGERIA". The Rt Rev S.O. Odutola, Bishop of Ondo-Benin diocese, stated at a Press Conference in Ibadan yesterday afternoon that the Christian Church was worried about the growing influence of Islam in Nigeria."
>
> On January 16, 1958, 'ISLAM GAINING GROUND IN WEST AFRICA"

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(Continued on page 10)

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